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North Beverly Environmental
Action Committee
P.O. Box 8
Wenham, MA 01984

Dear Committee Members:

Thank you for your thoughtful letter concerning the potential impacts of several sites in the Beverly Airport-Wenham Lake area. The following comments are in response to your letter dated January 15, 1987.

As stated in my letter dated May 30, 1986, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Quality Engineering (DEQE) has taken enforcement actions at both the Casco Chemical and Vitale sites located on Henderson Road. These enforcement actions were conducted under the Massachusetts 21e Superfund Law. Approximately 150 surface drums and several underground storage tanks were removed from the Casco Chemical site by DEQE's removal contractor in the fall of 1984 and the summer of 1986 respectively.

The tests referred to in the beginning of your letter were conducted for various reasons, none of which were to evaluate the impact of these properties on Wenham Lake. As part of the drum removal a monitoring well was installed at the Casco site. Detected in the groundwater samples were petroleum derived compounds and extremely low levels of trichloroethylene. The Normandeau Associates study included a soil gas survey which attempted to identify surface organic contamination. DEQE reviewed the soil gas survey and informed the owner and generator that additional environmental monitoring would have to be conducted.

Regarding the former Nike Base, the EPA will contact the Defense Department regarding their schedule for evaluating this site. This type of evaluation could be conducted by the United States Army Toxic and Hazardous Materials Agency (USATHAMA).

The Vitale site has had a history of DEQE enforcement actions. DEQE has informed my staff that a consent decree will be signed this winter and that site work should begin in the spring of 1987. The consent decree was negotiated in response to DEQE's Administrative Order filed in April 1986. The site work will address the flyash, potential groundwater contamination, and soil contamination.

The information DEQE has provided indicates they are pursuing an active clean-up strategy for the Beverly Airport-Wenham Lake area. EPA will continue to monitor the State's enforcement actions at these sites. Through a cooperative agreement with EPA, DEQE has identified the Casco and Vitale sites for Preliminary Assessments (PA) during 1987. The PA is the initial evaluation in screening sites for potential inclusion on the National Priorities List (NPL).

To date DEQE has not detected any hazardous contaminants discharging into Wenham Lake Reservoir. The lake will continue to be monitored by DEQE to ensure that no contaminants are released into the water supply.

If you have any questions or comments concerning this letter please contact Michael Nalipinski of my staff at 617-565-3690. The State contact is Steve Johnson in DEQE's Woburn Office at 617-935-2160.

Sincerely,

Michael R. Deland
Regional Administrator

cc: William Cass

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